

12 November, 1959

The American Hibiscus Society
c/o L. K. Thompson,
P. O. Box 92
Bartow, Florida
U.S.A.

Dear Sirs,

Through the courtesy of Mrs. Stewart Eagan of Panama, I have been given your Name and Address; in fact she has forwarded your letter of April 22nd for my information.

Mrs. Eagan was here on a visit quite recently, and I was able to show her some of the interesting new Varieflies that I have produced by cross-pollination. I have been doing this for some years, but had to stop because I have limited space in which to plant the worthwhile new Colours obtained.

Just recently, I have managed to cross the Orchid colour Hibiscus with the Dark Purple Throat, after many trials over a period of years. I have obtained about 20 young plants which are now 5" to 6" tall, but of course do not know what results will be obtained. What I would really like to do is to introduce some of this Orchid shade into the Double White, but all attempts so far have been unseccessful.

I discussed the matter 2 months ago with the Export Manager of Atlee Burpee Co. who was here on a business visit, but he was not able to give me any practical assistance. Apparently, it is always difficult to get the Doubles to seed, and if you can help me in this respect I would be very interested to have your advice. I have several Doubles, including the Variegated Red and White.

The usual method of propagation employed here is by Cuttings, but as you say some of the new varieties produced from seedlings are rather weak, and inclined to damage in the wind. This is particularly the case

with the finest Hybrid I have produced. Perhaps you can recommend a strong stock for grafting which would thrive under local climatic conditions of perpetual Summer, with an 80/85 deg. F. temperature in the shade.

At one time I had hopes of making an Album of Colour Pictures of my own Crossings, but I found that Photography is not sufficiently refined at present to distinguish the variations in Shade.

Looking forward to the pleasure of hearing from you or your Society.

Yours faithfully,
Stephen Psaila

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A PORTION OF Mr. THOMPSON'S ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

We find that most of the better hybrids do not seed except in cool weather (less than 70°). Under these conditions, the doubles often bloom single and may be pollinated. Cool weather also preserves the bloom for sufficient time for the pollen to reach the ovary before it wilts. In this way, we have an advantage over you in producing seed. Through the years, we have also found many varieties that produce superior seed. We have also found that colors of the parents have little to do with the color of the seedlings. An entire range of color may appear from one seed pod.

No doubt you have the original chinese single scarlet available. We have found that it makes a satisfactory root stock under most conditions. In fact, you will probably find that any variety that is a thrifty grower for you will make good stock. Hibiscus graft so readily that it is not a problem.

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They used to say airplanes for the individual, eventually, would be as cheap as cars. But now, they're working on making cars as expensive as airplanes.

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